

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 02181 151724Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4214

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 2181

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM TOON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR, US

SUBJECT: LETTER TO SAKHAROV

REF: MOSCOW 2124

1. SAKHAROV TELEPHONED EMBOFF (COMBS) AT EMBASSY AFTER-NOON OF FEB 15 TO ASK IF "WE HAD ANY NEWS". HE CLEARLY WAS ASKING IF WE HAD RECEIVED THE ORIGINAL OF THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER. WHEN EMBOFF SAID WE HAD NO NEWS AS YET, SAKHAROV ASKED WHEN WE THOUGHT WE WOULD, ADDING THAT HE INTENDED "TO MAKE A PUBLIC STATEMENT AS SOON AS IT ARRIVED". EMBOFF SAID WE MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING BY THURSDAY, ALTHOUGH IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY FOR SURE. SAKHAROV REPLIED HE WOULD "TENTATIVELY PLAN ON THURSDAY". EMBOFF UNDERTOOK TO CALL HIM WHEN "NEWS" HAD ARRIVED.

2. IF, AS WE ASSUME, PRESIDENT'S LETTER WAS POUCHED FROM DEPARTMENT ON OR ABOUT FEB 9, WE SHOULD RECEIVE IT IN CLASSIFIED POUCH ARRIVING MOSCOW THIS EVENING (FEB 15). WE COULD THEN PLAN TO TELEPHONE SAKHAROV ON THURSDAY; WE PRESUME HE WOULD IMMEDIATELY COME TO THE EMBASSY TO RECEIVE THE LETTER. HE PROBABLY WOULD
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ARRANGE A PRESS CONFERENCE THURSDAY EVENING OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER. ALTERNATIVELY, WE COULD, IF THE DEPARTMENT WISHES, DELAY DELIVERING THE LETTER FOR THREE OR FOUR DAYS IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH A SCENARIO ALONG THE LINES SET FORTH IN MOSCOW'S 2124.

3. IN ANY EVENT, AS I HAVE INDICATED IN MOSCOW 2124, I

CONSIDER IT IMPORTANT THAT WE GIVE THE SOVIETS ADVANCE WARNING OF THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER. IF A HIGH-LEVEL DEMARCHE ON THE GENERAL MATTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS, WHICH I HAVE RECOMMENDED, CANNOT BE DONE BY THE TIME WE DELIVER THE LETTER TO SAKHAROV, THEN I RECOMMEND A SPECIFIC DEMARCHE ON THE LETTER, EITHER IN WASHINGTON TO DOBRYNIN OR IN MOSCOW TO FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER KUZNETSOV (ASSUMING THAT GROMYKO IS STILL OUT OF ACTION). I WOULD SUGGEST DEMARCHE BE ON FOLLOWING LINES:

--THE SOVIET SIDE IS UNDOUBTEDLY WELL AWARE OF THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT REGARDING HUMAN RIGHTS; WE HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE PRAVDA EDITORIAL OF FEB 12, WHICH WE TAKE AS AN AUTHORITATIVE REFLECTION OF THE SOVIET POSITION;

--OUR INTERPRETATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND WHAT CONSTITUTES INTERFERENCE IN EACH OTHER'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS OBVIOUSLY DIFFER FUNDAMENTALLY;

--WE APPROACH THIS, AS OTHER ISSUES THAT DIVIDE US, IN A SPIRIT OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING RATHER THAN PUBLIC CONFRONTATION;

--WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WILL SOON BE IN TOUCH PRIVATELY WITH THE SOVIET SIDE REGARDING THIS DIFFICULT AND FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION;
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--IN THE MEANTIME, WE ARE INSTRUCTED TO INFORM THE SOVIET SIDE THAT ON FEB 5 THE PRESIDENT WROTE A BRIEF LETTER TO SAKHAROV, SETTING FORTH THE PRESIDENT'S GENERAL PHILOSOPHY ON THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, WHILE WE DO NOT INTEND TO PUBLICIZE THIS LETTER, SAKHAROV MAY DO SO;

--WE ARE MAKING THIS DEMARCHE BECAUSE WE FEEL IT IS IN OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS TO MINIMIZE THE IMPACT OF OUR DISPARATE VIEWS ON HUMAN RIGHTS UPON BILATERAL RELATIONS.

4. PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHETHER YOU WOULD PREFER US TO DELIVER THE LETTER UPON RECEIPT THIS WEEK OR DELAY SEVERAL DAYS.
TOON

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 15-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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